

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 325 044

HE 023 963

TITLE Universality, Diversity, Interdependence: The Missions of IAU. Policy Outline 1990-1995. International Association of Universities General Conference (9th, Helsinki, Finland, August 5-11, 1990).

INSTITUTION International Association of Universities, Paris (France).

PUB DATE Aug 90

NOTE 18p.

PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Educational Policy; Futures (of Society); Higher Education; *Institutional Mission; International Cooperation; *International Educational Exchange; *International Organizations; International Programs; Organizational Objectives; *Policy Formation

IDENTIFIERS *International Association of Universities

ABSTRACT

This policy outline was issued to guide the work of the International Association of Universities (IAU) as it develops policy for the further development of services, outreach, and partnerships. Services being rendered or developed by IAU's International Universities Bureau are described to provide a departure point for policy considerations. These activities include the IAU/Unesco Information Centre on Higher Education, TRACE (Trans Regional Academic Mobility and Credential Evaluation Information Network), the Clearinghouse for Academic Resource Information Networks, research on higher education, a scholarly journal titled "Higher Education Policy," studies and meetings, the University Based Critical Mass System for Information Technology, exchange of materials and persons, the International Student Identity Card, International Academic Card, International Currency Clearing System, and development of a "virtual international university" network. A discussion of the development of outreach and partnerships focuses on: membership; services to non-members; appropriate delivery structures for services; adequate resources; development of a privileged cooperative relationship among IAU's Associate Members, Unesco, and United Nations University; and increased efficiency of international cooperation. This policy discussion is then placed in the perspective of a future "IAU 2000." (JDD)

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ED325044

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES
NINTH GENERAL CONFERENCE



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI
5-11 AUGUST 1990

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UNIVERSALITY, DIVERSITY, INTERDEPENDENCE :
THE MISSIONS OF IAU

POLICY OUTLINE 1990 - 1995

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The Ninth IAU General Conference

The year 1990 marks the fortieth anniversary of IAU. While these forty years are a time to look back and reflect on the changes which the universities of the world, and their Association, have gone through, it is also an occasion to map out the course for the future. The General Conference which, according to the IAU Constitution, determines the general policy of the Association, provides the moment both for stock-taking and for wide-range discussion on the policy to be pursued during the next quinquennium.

To know where one is going often demands an appreciation of where one has come from. Three publications which have been made available to the Members of the Conference, are meant to provide the background for this reflection.

The first is the Commemorative Essay by *Georges Daillant, Universality, Diversity, Interdependence – IAU 1950-1990*, a historical record which sets the life of the Association in the wider context of the unprecedented changes which were to transform the university scene as it was perceived in 1947 when the notion of creating a worldwide university association was put forward.

The second is the collection of *Administrative Reports 1985 to 1989* which gives an account of the development of the activities of the Association since the last General Conference in Los Angeles and therefore also lays out, in particular in the 1989 Report, the basis on which the Association embarks onto the next decade.

The third publication, the Report of the Second IAU Mid-Term Conference of Heads of Member Institutions, Rio de Janeiro, 1988, on *International University Co-operation – A Critical Analysis: Failures, Successes, Perspectives*, offers rich material for the definition of IAU's role and purpose. The discussions at this Conference have, indeed, provided important input and practical orientation for the ongoing development of services offered by the Association and its International Universities Bureau.

The main objectives of the Association, as set out by its Constitution forty years ago, are *to give expression to the obligation of universities as social institutions to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity, and to develop material and moral aid on an international level, by providing a centre of co-operation at the international level among the universities and similar institutions of higher education of all countries, as well as among organizations in the field of higher education generally.*

The difficult situation which IAU had to face at the beginning of the past five-year period constituted, at the same time, a tremendous challenge which allowed the Association to redefine and consolidate its strategy and action with regard to those

constitutional objectives. This is reflected in the effort to bind the activities and affairs of IAU more explicitly into an overall assessment of emerging needs and requirements to serve the international university community in a dramatically changing socio-political, global context. The major direction was already laid down by the new Administrative Board at its meeting in Paris, 1986, when it chose as an overall theme for the Quinquennium: *Place, Role and Responsibility of Universities in the Development of our Societies and of International Co-operation at the Approach of the Twenty-First Century*. A detailed programme to implement this orientation was then adopted by the Board at its meeting in Harare in 1987. The new approach is summarized in the State of the Art Report given by the Secretary-General to the Rio Mid-Term Conference, contained in the publication mentioned earlier.

The principal instrument for the execution of the Association's programmes is the International Universities Bureau with its headquarters at Unesco House in Paris. Again, the Constitution of IAU set out, forty years ago, the main tasks of the Bureau, which meanwhile have only further increased in importance. They can be basically summarized as service-oriented action in three major areas: the exchange of information on higher education; the exchange of people - students, teachers, researchers, administrators; and the exchange of publications and material for teaching and research.

One of the underlying assumptions in developing the responsibilities of IAU and its International Universities Bureau has been that this service character is essential for the relevance of the Association's work, and that this work is to be situated on a consistent axis of information, reflection and action: responding to basic information needs concerning higher education systems, institutions, trends and developments; generating, on an international level, informed reflection, research and higher education policy discussion; and, on this basis, organizing pertinent action programmes to facilitate and develop international co-operation and exchange in higher education.

The basis that allows IAU, in full independence, to play its unique role as an international catalyst and clearing-house for worldwide university co-operation is provided by its membership. From it come the financial resources, the moral authority and the intellectual potential which enable IAU to serve the world higher education community. In return, the members are the prime beneficiaries of productive interaction, those most interested in that the work of the Association responds to real needs. The General Conference provides a unique platform for university leaders, from all over the world, to meet and to exchange their experience and views, to draw conclusions and to formulate policy requirements. The presence, at the Conference, of non-member institutions and of national and international organizations, the involvement of actual and potential partners of the Association in this discussion process, enriches the work of the Conference and widens the perspective.

The expansion and development of the IAU programme of activities in recent years would, indeed, not have been possible with the limited resources available, had a major concern not been the establishment of various partnerships and alliances which, while serving directly the interests of those involved, helped to achieve major objectives as defined in the IAU Constitution. Co-operation and networking have become a major

underlying concept for the planning and implementation of activities of the International Universities Bureau. Thus, the unique position of IAU is more and more appreciated by various institutions, bodies and organizations dealing with higher education, be it on a national or an international level, governmental or non-governmental.

From that, it would appear that the further development of services, the further development of outreach and the further development of partnerships could provide the three major dimensions of IAU policy for the next quinquennium. The essence of such a policy can be derived from the very theme of this General Conference: Universality, Diversity, Interdependence – The Missions of the University. From it follow the missions of IAU.

II

The Development of Services

The following policy considerations take as a departure point the services that are at present being rendered or developed by IAU's International Universities Bureau. They will be described only to the extent that is necessary for the understanding of the further-going considerations. A detailed presentation of the activities of the Association and its Bureau is given in the 1989 Report of the published collection of *Administrative Reports*, mentioned earlier.

A. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

1. *IAU/Unesco Information Centre on Higher Education*

In 1989, the IAU Documentation Centre was transformed into the Joint IAU/Unesco Information Centre on Higher Education through a formal agreement with Unesco. The Centre, which continues to be run under the responsibility and direction of IAU, is linked to the Unesco mainframe computer and with the network of Unesco Documentation Centres and Information Units, and receives technical support from Unesco. Through this partnership, an important basis has been laid to make the specialized collection of literature and documentation on higher education worldwide currently held by the International Universities Bureau more readily accessible to a significantly greater number of users on the international, national, institutional and individual level.

The Centre, which is now fully computerized, is strongly solicited, to a large extent by inquiries concerning questions related to the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees, scholarships and university co-operation and exchanges, but also by requests concerning national systems of higher education, programmes of study, information about individual institutions, higher education statistics, research on higher education and specialized bibliographies. Instruments for a more generalized dissemination of

information held by the Centre are the new *IAU Bulletin* and, to some extent, the *IAU Journal Higher Education Policy*.

Several international databases have been developed, the most important of which are a bibliographical database, an institutional database, and a database on research on higher education. In a first stage, the information held by the International Universities Bureau is being computerized and facilities to access this information are being improved. At the same time, IAU plays an active role in the establishment of linkages for international data networks and cooperative projects for data-sharing. Thus, an international bibliographical reference service is being developed with a number of partners, such as Unesco's specialized Centres for Higher Education and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. Together with the research database this will provide an important tool for identifying expertise on higher education and higher education policies and facilitate communication and networking among specialists in this field.

The institutional database now allows the fully computerized production of IAU's two major reference works, the *International Handbook of Universities* and the *World List of Universities*. It will further allow to produce more specialized and targeted information, such as disciplinary directories or specific information services for the implementation of university co-operation and partnerships. This database was also at the origin of IAU's involvement in TRACE.

2. TRACE

IAU has played a major part in creating a new international computerized information network on higher education called TRACE (Trans Regional Academic Mobility and Credential Evaluation Information Network).

TRACE was developed over the past three years by a group of experts from several international and national organizations dealing with studies abroad and the evaluation of foreign academic and professional credentials. This decentralized information system allows to exchange and access reliable and standardized information on higher education using modern communications technology, thereby avoiding duplication in data collection and updating. At the TRACE Constitutive Assembly, in October 1989, IAU was unanimously designated as the Coordinating Agency of the network. The database is hosted by the National Computer Centre of the University of Montpellier in France. For dissemination and retrieval purposes, several forms of access to the information are foreseen, including electronic mail, on-line access, computer diskettes, CD-ROM and print-outs.

Standardized data on three different aspects of higher education is being collected and processed, namely on higher education systems in the different countries, their structure and organization, including the normative framework for international co-operation (exchange agreements, conventions); on higher education institutions, including detailed data on organization and governance, admissions criteria, programmes of study, enrolment statistics, co-operation agreements, etc; and on higher education qualifications

and credentials awarded by institutions in different countries.

TRACE has at present twenty members, mostly from the major industrialized countries, but also from the Arab Region and from Latin America. As it is conceived as a worldwide network for the fully computerized collection, processing and retrieval of information, a major challenge lies in gradually expanding the membership while, at the same time, generating the necessary technical and conceptual support to both data providers and data users to allow them to draw full benefit from this cooperative venture.

3. *Clearinghouse for Academic Resource Information Networks*

The institutional database established at the IAU/Unesco Information Centre on Higher Education and, in a considerably enhanced form, the TRACE Network provide detailed information on institutions of higher education, their faculties and departments, their fields of studies etc., worldwide. These initiatives are the core of what is designed to become a comprehensive international higher education information system. IAU has undertaken first steps to prepare the extension of the network concept to disciplinary and topical academic databases. Thus, the International Universities Bureau has developed a database for the International Council of Scientific Union (ICSU) which is compatible with the IAU databases and may be interlinked with them. The International Social Science Council (ISSC) has approached the Bureau with the request to develop a similar system for that Organization. IAU, in co-operation with the major scientific organizations and other partners such as Unesco and the United Nations University, is thus in a key position to facilitate, through the use of modern information and communication technologies, worldwide access to information on academic expertise through the development of an international clearinghouse for academic resource information networks.

B. HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH AND POLICY DISCUSSION

A major, and inalienable role of IAU as a worldwide forum and representative university organization is to take an active part in the international discussion on trends and issues in higher education and higher education policies, to formulate important concerns related to the missions of the university and to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and insight necessary for identifying and resolving major problems and for assuring that the vital conditions for the functioning of higher education are being recognized and actually met.

1. *Research on Higher Education*

IAU can play an important catalyzing role by facilitating the organization of meetings, studies and research on topics related to higher education internationally, and to international co-operation in this field. The setting up of an international database on research on higher education, as referred to earlier, will facilitate the identification of related expertise and scholars active in this field worldwide, and provide linkages, communication and networking facilities to this scientific community. This will

be an important contribution to the stimulation of international research, and will provide, at the same time, a major input to IAU's own activities, its own studies and meetings.

In order to find ways of advancing international collaborative research into higher education and to strengthen the various networks of those working in the different areas of higher education, several possibilities will have to be examined. The essential feature is, however, that all efforts should be perceived as being immediately relevant to the various constituencies in higher education which exist beyond the world of research. Any endeavour that may thus be stimulated or generated through IAU should clearly be conceived as being "grounded", that is, that it ought to reflect the current concerns both of IAU Members and through them, of Academia itself.

2. *Higher Education Policy*

A new forum for international policy discussion has been created through the IAU Journal *Higher Education Policy*. Clearly, though reflecting the interests of the Association and its Members, this is also a self-standing scholarly journal. There is evidence of the intrinsic interest in the journal on the part of the scholarly community and of policy-makers, and a major marketing effort will be made to increase further the outreach of the periodical and, by that, the visibility which it provides for IAU.

Overall, one has reason to be satisfied with the progress of the journal. It remains nevertheless a fact that some countries, from which one would most like to receive contributions, are amongst the most reticent in providing them. This makes it difficult, to say the least, to correct a species of in-built bias which exists in higher education research towards industrialized countries. A major role of IAU can be seen, precisely, in providing through its efforts a better and more balanced understanding of major needs, trends and issues in higher education worldwide.

3. *IAU Studies and Meetings*

For the same reason, and based on its own substantial involvement with the scientific community of specialists on higher education, it would appear desirable for IAU to revive its tradition of producing itself substantial international studies on crucial problems of higher education. It will, furthermore, be necessary to find adequate approaches to organize meetings and seminars of the Association in such a manner that they can remain meaningful in spite of the constraints imposed by the apparent contradiction between the complexity of issues and the stipulated universality of participation.

This aspect is of particular importance with regard to meetings organized for Heads of Member Institutions, as part of the "associative" life of IAU. Such interaction between these higher education leaders, if properly organized, can be very beneficial. At the same time, the close contact to be maintained between Members, the Administrative Board and the Secretariat, is vital for the Association.

Given the size and the widespread character of IAU's membership, the goal is, however, often very difficult to achieve within the limits of available resources. This is the paradox that IAU has always had to live with. Its main source of strength, i.e. increasing diversified membership, is at the same time a potential source of weakness, and imaginative ways will have to be found to remedy this situation through systematic and sustained efforts to improve communication and interaction on well-defined, relevant issues.

C. UNIVERSITY CO-OPERATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

IAU and its International Universities Bureau act in many ways as an agent and catalyst in promoting international co-operation and exchange in higher education. Of course, this, the Association's central objective, is supported by all its major activities, information services, research and meetings. In addition, numerous other services are rendered on a regular basis to various organizations, institutions and individuals seeking advice and good offices. Recently, however, a number of projects and concepts have been developed that could allow the Association to make a substantial direct contribution to university co-operation programmes and to the development of higher education.

1. *University Based Critical Mass System for Information Technology (USIT)*

IAU has proposed to Unesco a project devised to help close the technology gap between industrialized and developing countries, but also within certain industrialized countries, with regard to the use of microcomputers in higher education. The central point of the argument is that, irrespective of whether the context involves industrialized countries, those in the course of industrialization or those under development, the existence of the technology gap poses fundamental questions for hitherto accepted methods of knowledge distribution and dissemination.

The proposal puts forward an alternative approach to the dissemination of informatics, with the following objectives in mind: to foster the development of a system designed to achieve in key higher education institutions and locations a critical mass in the development and dissemination of micro-computer based information technologies; to put forward appropriate strategies for the implementation and dissemination of such a system across countries with highly diverse needs and skill levels; and to develop plans for adequate, wide-spread use of information technologies in higher education management, research and teaching, respecting the particular economic, social and cultural conditions prevailing in different national contexts.

A central feature in the operationalisation of USIT rests on the supply of low-cost micro-computers and the provision for suitable training programmes and expertise. A pilot project has been launched for Romania, within the framework of the Inter-governmental Informatics Programme, and in co-operation with the Unesco European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES). Other Eastern and Central European countries have already expressed their interest to be included in the programme, as have some Arab countries. It is foreseeable that the project will meet wide interest in developing

countries and has the potential to make a major contribution to the development of teaching, research and administration in higher education, as well as to international co-operation and the access to the international knowledge base through information technology.

2. Exchange of Publications, Material and Persons in Higher Education

IAU is cooperating with the European Rectors' Conference (CRE) and the Unesco European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) in the setting-up of a computerized clearing-system for the exchange of publications, materials, scholars and students as part of a European Inter-university Solidarity Campaign. This project, while providing concrete support to the development of Central and Eastern European universities, allows the International Universities Bureau, at the same time, to acquire the necessary expertise and to set up an adequate infrastructure for extending this clearing-system effectively so as to shift the emphasis eventually to developing countries. This opens an avenue for the development of far-reaching co-operation and exchange programmes, in collaboration with other organizations and in particular also in connection with the Unesco's programmes for the Twinning of Universities (UNITWIN).

3. International Student Identity Card, International Academic Card and International Currency Clearing System

Since Autumn 1989, IAU is sponsoring the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), issued conjointly by the International Student Travel Confederation (ISTC) and the International Union of Students (IUS). The involvement of IAU broadens the conceptual basis of the Card so as to make it a major instrument for the promotion of academic mobility by providing a linkage to the support and services which the Association can provide in this field. Through this venture, as too through TRACE, IAU thus has an opportunity to assume an active role in the promotion of student exchange.

In connection with the involvement in the International Student Identity Card, IAU started to explore the possibility of the creation of an International Academic Card for university staff. Such an instrument could provide facilities to decrease the cost of academic travel as well as appropriate insurance coverage and, at the same time, enhance the effectiveness of academic exchanges by making available to card-holders the information services, contacts and linkages that IAU can provide.

This venture is studied together with the development of an international currency clearing-system for academic co-operation which would further allow the cost of academic exchanges to be defrayed in local currency. The basic idea of this concept is to apply the principle of compensation, currently practised in bi-lateral exchanges, within a multi-lateral framework.

These projects certainly correspond to real needs and it seems worthwhile to explore their implementation further with appropriate partners.

4. *The Virtual International University*

As IAU is today able to respond to increasing and new demands and to render more services to its Members in a more efficient manner, particularly through the use of modern information technology and enhanced communication facilities, a new pattern is emerging. The Association becomes itself a network with the Secretariat acting as a clearinghouse and service centre.

When developing a long-term perspective for IAU, it seems appropriate to think of its Members as a "virtual international university" or a collection of "virtual universities" in the sense that networking technology has the potential to link individual faculty and researchers at remote locations into a coherent community. This concept could include both existing IAU services and new services, yet to be offered. Access to these services could be granted through an instrument like the International Academic Card, it being understood that they would both stimulate international travel and make international exchange possible without physical travel.

In this scenario, a card holder could be eligible for three types of services: access, from the home university, to a broad range of academic, scientific and practical information through the "virtual international university" network; travel support services to both facilitate international travel and obtain cost discounts and the opportunity to pay in local currency; and local academic services and facilities while visiting other Member Universities.

Bold as this vision may appear, one will have to acknowledge that all of these services are already being offered under one form or the other, in a dispersed manner, for different target groups and by various suppliers. It would give a renewed sense to the Association to rely on the inner strength which it can deploy through networking, by effectively linking up the immeasurable potentials vested in its individual Members. It would mean starting to prepare "IAU 2000".

III

Development of Outreach and of Partnerships

A. DEVELOPMENT OF OUTREACH

The "outreach" of the Association addresses the question, what impact do any of its activities have on its Members and on the world higher education community at large. The answer to this question depends, on the one hand, on the usefulness of IAU's activities and services - to what degree they correspond to real needs - and, on the other hand, on the extent to which these services are geared to, or accessible for, the appropriate target groups - those who really need them. Under the assumption that the services described earlier and their further development correspond, as such, to

real needs, the Association and its Bureau will still have to make major efforts to overcome a situation, in which Members and other potential users are by far insufficiently aware of the benefits they can draw from the Association and of the appropriate ways to use its services.

1. *Membership*

With regard to the delivery of services to the membership of the Association, a clearer distinction will be necessary as to who is actually concerned by a proposed activity or service. Is it the Institution as such, the Head of the Institution, a specific sub-unit involved in teaching, research or administration, or is it individual faculty, staff or students? A more differentiated approach will require considerable effort, but it will ensure that activities and services actually attain their target and their purpose. It will, at the same time, anchor IAU's recognition at different levels of the Institution, which is important also from the point of view of legitimacy when the overall institutional usefulness of membership to IAU is being assessed.

If, furthermore, the usefulness of membership to IAU is accepted as such, it is obvious that a second major marketing strategy should consist in convincing universities who are not members to join IAU. This strengthens the Association and, thus, further increases both its service and policy potential. All convinced members of the Association should join in this effort.

A final point should be made in this context. It is true that the basis for IAU's activities is provided by the Association's institutional membership. It must, however, not be overlooked that the creative potential of the Association is personalized in the higher education leaders who agree to participate actively in the life of the Association. As these leaders draw their legitimation to be active in IAU from their institutional function or their membership to the Association's Board, their valuable support is often, and regretfully, lost as soon as they no longer hold that function. There appears to be a clear interest to dispose, within IAU, of a more personalized forum for the continued involvement of higher education leaders, present or past, in international policy discussion and co-operation in higher education. This could be an efficient means to strengthen further the outreach of the Association, and the Conference and the new Board may also wish to examine this particular question.

2. *Services to Non-members*

IAU, and in particular its International Universities Bureau, has always rendered a great number of higher education-related services also to non-member institutions, to national and international organizations and agencies, governmental and non-governmental bodies, university and non-university institutions and, of course, individuals. Similar marketing strategies, as outlined for the IAU memberships, will also have to be applied to these groups of *interessés* which often are, at the same time, important partners for collaboration with IAU.

3. *Appropriate Delivery Structures*

The problem of access to the benefits and services which IAU provides is linked to the question of the adequacy of its delivery mechanisms. The best of all products, if it rests in the warehouse, does not fulfil its purpose. Therefore, appropriate distribution structures have to be developed to assure that the potential end-users can actually be reached, either by "home delivery" or by providing them with a sort of "key" to open access to the treasure that IAU can offer.

Member Institutions themselves can most adequately assume the role of major distribution agents for those working in them and with them. IAU, in turn, will have to develop the kind of assistance that will allow them to discharge this function. Already, the considerably enhanced communication and interaction between Members and the Bureau of the Association is a first development in this direction. A further step to facilitate the task could be to move closer to the Members by strengthening IAU's presence in the different regions, particularly in those who are the most remote from the Association's headquarters in Paris. A key role in a decentralized delivery system can effectively also be played by IAU's organisational partners, such as the Associate Members or professionals and scientific organizations.

In addition, the Bureau is making every effort to diminish communication barriers arising from language difficulties, particularly through a conscious staff policy, paying special attention to wide-spread language capacities. This should be completed by a deliberate attempt to secure the means for providing services, notably the Association's publications and access to database information, in several major languages beyond the official ones, English and French.

A basic common feature for many of the services that are proposed by IAU and its International Universities Bureau is that they serve directly various groups of individuals for the fulfilment of their respective tasks within an institution or organization. In many cases it would therefore certainly be more rational to give those individuals direct access to the service, thus avoiding administrative and organisational procedures which might themselves imply limitations and obstacles. The concept of an International Academic Card mentioned earlier could offer a major possibility to provide that direct access "key" to large groups of well-defined eligible persons who could thus immediately and efficiently use the Association's service potential for their professional purposes.

4. *Adequate Resources*

The impact that the Association can reach through its activities depends, in a decisive manner, on the availability of adequate funds. As can be seen from the *Administrative Reports 1985 to 1989*, IAU went through an extremely critical phase during the past quinquennium, as far as its finances were concerned. This is mainly a direct consequence of the steep decline of the US Dollar with regard to the French Franc, given the fact that the most important part of the income of the Association, the membership dues, is received almost entirely in US Dollars, whereas all expenditures

in Paris have to be paid in French Francs. The Administrative Board, in this situation, gave authorization to draw on the Association's reserves to cover the current expenditures, and subsequently adjusted the membership dues to recover part of the loss attributable to the decline of the exchange rate, as well as to inflation.

Fortunately, the dues adjustment has not led to any discernable negative result on membership. On the contrary, members respond positively to the dynamic development of the Association and appear more supportive towards it than in the past. The Association has been able to get the serious financial crisis which it was facing under control, to balance its budget and to stabilize the situation. But there remains a certain vulnerability, as the Dollar has further declined and adequate reserves have yet to be built up again. In view of the importance of membership dues in IAU's budget - a major guarantee for the Association's independence - it may be advisable to foresee a mechanism for their regular adjustment so as to avoid the negative effects of currency fluctuations and of inflation.

Furthermore, as the services of IAU become more sophisticated, it would appear justified not to be overly generous in providing them free of charge. It will therefore be necessary to establish a coherent policy of charging fees for these services, distinguishing, of course, between members which support the work of the Association through their dues, and non-members.

In addition, new ways have to be found to attract funds and to generate additional income for the Association. This is needed to provide it with the necessary financial basis and margin of manoeuvre to take up new challenges vigorously and to respond with adequate means to the immense need for innovative forms of support to international university co-operation and development.

B. DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS

In spite of the financial crisis that had to be resolved, IAU has been able to develop and even expand its programme of activities during the past years. It has already been mentioned that this would not have been possible without the establishment of various partnerships and alliances. The unique position of IAU has allowed it to initiate and to facilitate, to animate and to catalyze, and even to legitimize fruitful co-operation and the pooling of specific potentials between various partners with similar interests and objectives. Future efforts should be directed towards further strengthening this role of IAU and its International Universities Bureau as a true international clearinghouse for information, policy formulation and co-operation in higher education.

1. *Privileged Partners: IAU's Associate Members, Unesco and United Nations University*

Traditionally, the Associate Members of IAU are invited to take part in the meetings of the Administrative Board of the Association. As a new initiative, two Consultations were held with IAU's Associate Members (Toledo 1986, Cairo 1989), which led to the identification of a number of possibilities for co-operation and concertation as well as for joint strategies of this varied group representing together

the complexity of the world university community. A number of joint projects have emerged from this but the true cooperative potential of this special network has by far not been explored yet, and further possibilities to serve common purposes conjointly should be opened up.

The privileged cooperative relationship with Unesco has not only been maintained but further strengthened, as already stated earlier. The joint Unesco/IAU Steering Committee, designed to be a light, flexible structure in order to minimize bureaucratic constraints, has now evolved to the point of being a general working and coordinating mechanism between IAU and Unesco to identify and steer important joint projects.

At the Cairo Consultation with the Associate Members, it was also suggested that Unesco involve the international university community in the procedure of granting Unesco scholarships (especially identification and evaluation of candidatures), similar to the system established between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association of Commonwealth Universities. Other important areas of co-operation which are of direct concern to universities are the Unesco programmes for the twinning of universities (UNITWIN) and the establishment of so-called "Unesco chairs". A strengthening of co-operation with the United Nations University (UNU) has also been discussed and would certainly serve mutual interest.

2. Efficiency of International Co-operation

A special concern for organizations like IAU and its major partners is the improvement of the efficiency of inter-university co-operation and partnerships. This was specifically underlined during the Second IAU Mid-Term Conference in Rio. International co-operation on a scientific, intellectual and cultural level is crucial to the advancement of human knowledge and is a goal of academic communities throughout the world. Yet, the negotiation and implementation of co-operation agreements between universities sometimes seem to give rise to misunderstanding rather than the mutual understanding and excellent communication which is required to deal with highly complex multi-disciplinary and multi-national projects. Some programmes, for example, seem to be thwarted by inequalities between partners which impede full reciprocity of mutual benefits. This is particularly true in North-South programmes which can also be beset by problems evolving out of cultural differences and perceptions in relation to such social values as self-assertiveness and competitiveness, explicit versus implicit behaviour or, quite simply, differing notions of the imperatives of urgency.

This appears to be a worthwhile area for co-operation between IAU, its Associate Members and Unesco. The joint objective could be to review and to analyze the factors upon which the success or failure of programmes of co-operation appear to depend on, in order to work out criteria for evaluation and to formulate corresponding recommendations, and even organize intercultural training workshops for international programme administrators.

3. *Joint Strategies*

In general terms, it may be repeated that co-operation with various international, regional and national organizations and bodies, as well as with important disciplinary and professional organizations has been intensified and has even become rather the rule than the exception in IAU's work. This opens a vast perspective for the further development of linkages, networks and cooperative ventures for the future. In the light of what has been said with regard to the adequate financial basis for such new ventures, special efforts should also be directed to attracting and involving funding agencies as partners.

IAU could and should take initiatives towards the adoption of joint strategies by national and international agencies and organizations that play a major role in the policy formulation and the development and financing of higher education, and whose policies do not necessarily complement or support each other. It would appear desirable to establish adequate mechanisms for concerted consultation between the university organizations and governmental, as well as private funding and development agencies, national and international, to work out coherent or complementary policies and strategies. The same holds true for the coordination of efforts with the big scientific organizations which both, through their memberships and their work, represent the very substance of what makes up the missions of the university.

IV

IAU 2000

Just as the work of the past years has laid the ground for the proposed development of services, outreach and partnerships, the accomplishments of IAU during the new quinquennium will already prepare, in a decisive manner, the Association's way into the new Millennium. It appears therefore appropriate to place the present policy discussion already in the perspective for an "IAU 2000".

Although it is virtually impossible to foresee what this globe may look like ten years from now - the dramatic political developments that have occurred just over the past ten months, particularly in Europe, have defied any such predictions - there is a strong probability that universities, which over the centuries have affirmed the basic principles of their functioning irrespective of varying political contexts, will continue to play a vital role for the development of our societies and for the survival of mankind. Conscious of their essential missions, they will have to develop appropriate institutional and international means and mechanisms to respond to the new challenges in an extremely complex and, at the same time, increasingly interactive international environment.

Universality, diversity, interdependence - what is then the mission of an

organization like IAU? It is seen here as twofold: to identify, by drawing on the joint wisdom and experience of the international university community, major emerging trends in order to be able to anticipate and propose appropriate services and support structures to meet the new needs; and, by this responsiveness, to influence the process itself so as to foster a balanced distribution of responsibilities and an equitable share of all partners in the development.

The example of the dramatic changes that are currently marking Europe has been evoked. It is obvious that they have a major impact on the functioning of higher education on this continent, and warnings have been voiced that important West-East support programmes might be implemented at the expense of further decreasing assistance to the developing world. Such a danger certainly exists, but a pessimistic, short-term oriented attitude does not help to solve the problem and may even turn it into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A more positive, forward looking approach can, on the contrary, open most challenging prospects. It is indeed fascinating to see the metaphor of the "Common European Home" also applied to the European University. In co-operation with its partners in Europe, IAU has an important contribution to make to this construction process, as the most important European universities in East and West have been active members of long standing in the Association.

The other important aspect of this, however, is that by its active involvement IAU can also voice the need to see the new "Common European Home" integrate harmoniously with its neighbours, the "Homes" of the other Regions, in an emerging "Global Village" of higher education worldwide. The process can therefore also be seen as a tremendous opportunity for creating an unequalled new development potential.

At the same time, this unique experience allows IAU to consolidate its own operational base and new strategies and know-how, acquired in the West-East process, as well as the linkages and infrastructure established in this context, will enhance in a decisive manner the capability to provide effective assistance to development also on the North-South axes. Co-operation with appropriate bodies and organizations, notably with IAU's Associate Members, will allow to respond to varied and very concrete needs, taking into account regional and cultural specificities. The major challenge for IAU lies in its integrative, global vocation.

Learning by doing! This is not a very lofty perspective, but probably a very realistic one for IAU, if it wants to play the ambitious role that has been laid out in this paper, up to the year 2000. The motto is being honoured by the universities themselves, as it has always been a major driving principle for the advancement of science and knowledge and, through that, for human progress in general. Finally, it is courage and vision that determine the results.

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Secretary-General